

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, July 11, 2003

ARSON TASK FORCE CONTINUES INVESTIGATION

The arson task force composed of MPDC, the D.C. Fire/ESM Department, the Prince George's County Fire Department, and the Washington Field Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) continues to investigate the arsons that are suspected to be the work of a serial arsonist. On July 1 Chief Ramsey announced that the MPDC is offering a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for arson cases committed in the District of Columbia.

Stay up-to-date on the task force's investigation through the PG Fire/EMS website at <http://www.co.pg.md.us/Government/PublicSafety/Fire/arson.asp?h=20&s=&n=130>.

- ① As of July 3, the total reward fund for information in the cases in the region totaled \$6,500. Details at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?id=2175>
- ① The MPDC and DC Fire/EMS have released a list of the 13 suspicious fires being investigated in DC: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?id=2182>
- ① For arson prevention ideas, visit the InterFire Online Resource Center at: http://www.interfire.org/res_file/menu_bf.asp

WATER SAFETY FOR BOATS, JET SKIS, AND WAVE RIDERS

Summer activities abound here in the Washington area, and one of those activities is boating or using other personal watercraft, such as jet skis and wave riders, on the nearby Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. While boating and watercraft use is an excellent way to enjoy the summer and stay cool, there are several safety precautions that should be taken. In addition to having the appropriate number of personal flotation devices (PFD), or life jackets, the MPDC offers some tips that will make personal watercraft more welcome on the water:

- Remember to share the water with others.
- Stay on the lookout for other boats, skiers, and hazards.
- Use common sense to prevent mishaps.

In addition to safety and preparation tips, boating safety courses are offered through October 2003. The Boating Safety course is designed to educate boaters of the legal requirements, navigational rules, safety equipment, risks of boating accidents, and other issues pertaining to safe boating. Anyone operating a vessel on District of Columbia waterways is required to have a Boating Safety Certificate. The Boating Safety Certificate is issued to individuals who successfully complete the Boating Safety course.

- ① For information about the Harbor Patrol Unit, boating safety and course dates and locations, visit the MPDC's web site at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/harborpatrol.shtm>

MPDC ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR TWO APPLICANT INVESTIGATOR POSITIONS

The MPDC is currently seeking to fill two vacancies for the position of Investigator in the Department's Recruiting Unit. These are civilian positions and are open to all qualified applicants. The investigator ensures that applicants for both sworn and civilian positions within the MPDC meet the required employment standards by conducting an objective and thorough investigation of the backgrounds of the applicants. Salaries for the positions are \$33,024-\$42,543 per annum (DS-9) and \$39,805-\$51,308 per annum (DS-11).

SUCCESS STORY: PSA 311 COMMUNITY OUSTS KNOWN DRUG ESTABLISHMENT

Community members and police can look down the 600 block of T Street, NW with a bit more pride these days. After much hard work, they, along with the assistance of the US Attorney's Office (USAO) successfully shut down a local drug establishment that had been disguised as a pool hall. Rick's Billiards—and the pool hall that occupied the space previously—had been an eyesore to many nearby residents for quite some time. However, it took a partnership between the community residents, MPDC officers, and the USAO to ultimately get it closed.

Ben Friedman, the US Attorney who helped shut Rick's down, explained that the reason that shutting down the pool hall is different this time is because, as part of the closure, they removed the tables and other equipment, just leaving a shell. Any new owners of this establishment will be starting from scratch, and they will be notified of the community's concerns, thus reducing the likelihood that the next establishment will cause as many problems as the previous ones.

NEWS AND NOTES

Drug Free Zones. Drug free zones are in effect this weekend in PSAs 106, 401, and 702. Details on the Anti-Loitering/Drug Free Zone law are at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>

National Night Out. This year marks the 20th anniversary of National Night Out, America's night out against crime. Each year, the MPDC actively participates in this event by rallying community members throughout DC to join with their neighbors and the police officers in their PSAs in this event. National Night Out 2003 will be held on Tuesday, August 5 at Fort Stanton Recreation Center, 18th & Erie Streets, SE. For more information about National Night Out, visit <http://mpdc.dc.gov/serv/programs/nno.shtm>

Vouchers for Free Bike Helmets. Lt. Patrick Burke and the officers of the Traffic Safety Unit are preparing to combat common issues of bicycle safety on the District's streets. One way they're working to make cyclists safer is to provide free approved bicycle helmets to children they encounter throughout the city's PSAs. Kids will be given a voucher by PSA officers which they can then present to their local police district for a helmet. Watch for the vouchers soon.

ROC-North Open House. A grand opening ceremony will be held to mark the opening of the ROC-North Headquarters in the renovated former Petworth Elementary School building at 801 Shepherd St., NW, on July 30, beginning at 6:00 pm.

① For complete details on this and other positions, including salaries and application procedures, click on the Civilian Career page at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/civilian.shtm>

① Read more about this and other Third District success stories at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/3rd/success.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 7/11/03)

- 2003: 128
- 2002: 118
- % Change: +8.5%

Arrests (week ending 7/5/03)

- Total: 597
- Drugs: 135
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 16
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 29

Firearm Recoveries (as of 7/8/03)

- Total: 997
- July: 21

Traffic Fatalities (as of 7/11/03)

- 2003: 29
- 2002: 33
- % Change: -12.1%